

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to correct some minor typographical errors of which the undersigned has become aware. No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the specification be approved and entered.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite that the vibration roller of the present invention comprises an operating portion, a travel lever on the operating portion for controlling forward, neutral, and reverse operation of the roller, a safety switch for preventing an operator from being caught between the roller and an obstacle when moving backward, a travel switching device, and a safety device. In addition, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the safety device includes an operation cable which connects the travel lever and the travel switching device and which includes a bendable outer tube having a front end and a back end. Still further, claim 1 has also been amended to recite that the front end of the outer tube is supported on a side of the travel lever and the back end of the outer tube is

supported on a side of the travel switching device, and to recite that the back end of the outer tube is locked in front of the travel lever while the safety switch is not activated, and that the back end of the outer tube is released and extended in a direction of the travel lever when the safety switch is activated.

In addition, claims 2-5 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to better accord with amended independent claim 1.

Still further, new claims 6-20 have been added to recite additional features of the present invention disclosed in the specification and drawings.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-5 were rejected as being obvious in view of the combination of US 2003/0068201 ("Wynings") and USP 6,382,383 ("Schennach"). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, a vibration roller is provided with a safety feature to prevent an operator from being caught between the

roller and an obstacle when moving backward. To this end, the roller of the present invention as recited in amended claim 1, includes an operation cable (7) which connects a travel lever (4) and a travel switching device (6) and which includes a bendable outer tube (16) having a front end (16b) and a back end (16a). See Figs. 1 and 2. As recited in claim 1, the front end (16b) of the outer tube (16) is supported on a side of the travel lever (4) and the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) is supported on a side of the travel switching device (6).

To provide the safety function, as recited in claim 1, the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) is locked in front of the travel lever (4) while a safety switch (22) is not activated, and the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) is released and extended in a direction of the travel lever (4) when the safety switch (22) is activated. That is, the safety switch (22) is activated when the operator exerts pressure against a push plate (29), causing the locking of the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) to be released and thus allowing movement of an inner wire (8) of the operation cable (7) which is biased to return the travel lever (4) to a neutral operating position. See Figs. 4-6.

More specifically, the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) is locked by a locking mechanism (17). When the safety switch (22) is energized, the locking mechanism (17) is released thereby

extending the back end 16a of the outer tube (16) in the direction of the travel lever (4), and as a result, the inner wire (8) moves the lever (10) of the travel switching device (6) from reverse to neutral. Thus, the present invention uses resilience generated when the length of the outer tube (16) is extended to switch the roller from reverse to neutral, with the locking of the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) limiting the direction of movement of the inner wire (8). The locking mechanism (17) therefore moves the inner wire (8) using the resilience transmitted to the inner wire (8) when the lock at the back end (16a) of the outer tube (16) is released in an emergency - i.e., when pressure is exerted against the push plate (29).

It is respectfully submitted that the prior art references cited by the Examiner do not disclose a safety device including an operation cable as according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

The Examiner has cited Wynings to show a vibration roller, and the Examiner has cited Schennach to show a safety device.

It is respectfully submitted, however, that the safety device of Schennach does not have the structure of the safety device of the present invention as recited in amended claim 1. In particular, it is noted that Schennach describes a safety device which uses a clutch mechanism as a means to switch a roller from

reverse to neutral by manipulating a travel lever 3. The safety device of Schennach includes an impact pot 12 contacted by the operator and a plunger 13 which is connected to the impact pot 12 and moved thereby. In Schennach, the plunger 13 is formed with a conical point 16 which enters into a space between the adjusting element 7 and the travel lever 3 (which together form a jaw clutch 6) to axially displace the adjusting element 7 and thereby disengage the jaw clutch 6. (See column 4, lines 7-14 of Schennach.) And in Schennach, by releasing the connection between the travel lever 3 and the adjusting element 7, transmission of power to the adjusting element 7 when the roller is moving rearward is stopped.

It is respectfully submitted that in contrast to the structure of the claimed present invention, the safety device of Schennach does not include an operation cable which connects a travel lever and a travel switching device and which includes a bendable outer tube having a back end which is locked and released based on activation of a safety switch. In this connection, it is respectfully pointed out that although the Examiner referred to element 9 of Schennach as the outer tube, element 9 of Schennach is an actuating device serving as a control line and which is not connected to the travel lever 3 but rather is connected to the adjusting element 7. (See column 3, lines 43-46 of Schennach.) In addition, it is respectfully

pointed out that the actuating device 9 of Schennach is not disclosed as being bendable, and that the actuating device 9 of Schennach does not have a back end which is locked and released based on activation of a safety switch.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Schennach clearly does not disclose, teach or suggest the structure of the safety device of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, and that even if the safety device of Schennach were combinable with the vibration roller of Wynings in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the structure of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 would still not be achieved or rendered obvious.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 and claims 2-20 depending therefrom clearly patentably distinguishes over Wynings and Schennach, taken singly or in combination, under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

/Douglas Holtz/

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